

108TH CONGRESS
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H. CON. RES. 336

Expressing the sense of Congress that the continued participation of the Russian Federation in the Group of 8 nations should be conditioned on the Russian Government voluntarily accepting and adhering to the norms and standards of democracy.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 21, 2003

Mr. LANTOS (for himself and Mr. COX) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress that the continued participation of the Russian Federation in the Group of 8 nations should be conditioned on the Russian Government voluntarily accepting and adhering to the norms and standards of democracy.

Whereas the countries that comprise the Group of 7 nations are pluralistic societies with democratic political institutions and practices, committed to the observance of universally recognized standards of human rights, respect for individual liberties, and democratic political practices;

Whereas in 1991 and subsequent years, the leaders of the Group of 7 nations, heads of the governments of the major free-market economies of the world who meet an-

nually in a summit meeting, invited then-Russian President Boris Yeltsin to a post-summit dialogue;

Whereas in 1998, the leaders of the Group of 7 nations formally invited the president of Russia to participate in an annual gathering that subsequently was known as the Group of 8 nations, although the Group of 7 nations have continued to hold informal summit meetings and ministerial meetings that do not include the Russian Federation;

Whereas the invitation to President Yeltsin to participate in the annual summits was in recognition of the commitment of President Yeltsin to democratization and economic liberalization, despite the fact that the Russian economy remained weak and the commitment of the Russian Government to democratic principles was uncertain;

Whereas under the leadership of President Vladimir Putin, the Russian Government has attempted to control the activities of independent media enterprises, nongovernmental organizations, religious organizations, and other pluralistic elements of Russian society in an attempt to mute criticism of the government;

Whereas the suppression by the Russian Government of independent media enterprises has resulted in widespread government control and influence over the media in Russia, stifling freedom of expression and individual liberties that are essential to any functioning democracy;

Whereas the arrest and prosecution of prominent Russian business leaders who had supported the political opposition to President Putin are examples of selective application of the rule of law for political purposes;

Whereas the courts of Great Britain, Spain, and Greece have consistently ruled against extradition warrants issued by

the Russian Government after finding that the cases presented by the Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation have been inherently political in nature;

Whereas Russian military forces continue to commit brutal atrocities against the civilian population in Chechnya;

Whereas the rise to influence within the Russian Government of unelected security officials from the KGB of the former Soviet Union is increasingly undermining the Russian Government's commitment to democratic principles, accountability, and transparency;

Whereas a wide range of observers at think tanks and non-governmental organizations have expressed deep concern that the Russian Federation is moving away from the political and legal underpinnings of a market economy; and

Whereas the continued participation of the Russian Federation in the Group of 8 nations, including the Russian Government's opportunity to host the G-8 summit in 2006 as planned, is a privilege that is premised on the Russian Government voluntarily accepting and adhering to the norms and standards of democracy: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
 2 *concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—*

3 (1) the selective prosecution of political oppo-
 4 nents and the suppression of free media by the Rus-
 5 sian Federation, and the continued commission of
 6 widespread atrocities in the conduct of the brutal
 7 war in Chechnya, do not reflect the minimum stand-

ards of civilized nations that characterize every other member state in the Group of 8;

(2) the continued participation of the Russian Federation in the Group of 8 nations, including the Russian Government's opportunity to host the G-8 summit in 2006 as planned, should be conditioned on the Russian Government voluntarily accepting and adhering to the norms and standards of free, democratic societies as generally practiced by every other member nation, including—

(A) the rule of law, including protection from selective prosecution and protection from arbitrary state-directed violence;

(B) a court system free of political influence and manipulation;

(C) a free and independent media;

(D) a political system open to participation by all citizens and which protects freedom of expression and association; and

(E) the protection of universally recognized human rights; and

(3) the President of the United States and the Secretary of State should work with the other members of the Group of 7 to take all necessary steps to suspend the participation of the Russian Federa-

1 tion in the Group of 8 nations until the President,
2 after consultation with the other members of the
3 Group of 7, determines and reports to Congress that
4 the Russian Government is committed to respecting
5 and upholding the democratic principles described in
6 paragraph (2).

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